



Australian Bureau of Statistics

2903.0.55.002 - How Australia Takes a Census, 2006

ARCHIVED ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 01/08/2006 First Issue

MEDIA RELEASE

August 1, 2006

Embargoed: 11:30 AM (AEST)

C29/2006

Building a picture of Australia's cultural wealth.

To ensure that a complete picture can be built of Australia's cultural wealth, everyone in Australia, including overseas visitors, needs to ensure that they are counted on Census Night, Tuesday 8 August.

Census information tells us how many people there are in each part of Australia, what they do and how they live, as well as providing a detailed picture of the ethnic community make-up of Australia. The Census collects information for about 280 countries of birth, 240 languages and 120 religions across Australia.

Questions on the Census form about ancestry, religion, birthplace and languages spoken are used by governments and community organisations for forming policy, allocating resources and targeting services to particular cultural groups such as language support services.

The Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia (FECCA) endorses the Census. "Your help is vitally important for the future of our community," FECCA Chairperson Voula Messimeri said.

"It's important that the questions are answered accurately, especially the questions asking about your ancestry, country of birth, language spoken at home and religion. Please write your answer to these questions in the space provided if it is not listed on the form," said Ms Messimeri.

Census collectors, who will carry official photo identification and a distinctive yellow Collector bag, will call on every household before 8 August to leave a Census form. They will return to pick up the completed form in the two weeks after Census night.

Head of Census, Paul Williams, said that people needing assistance to understand or complete the form can ask the collector for help.

"Alternatively, they can ring the Census Inquiry Service Language Helpline on 1300 363 365 or visit the ABS web site www.abs.gov.au/census which contains translated material in over 30 languages," Mr Williams said.

All information collected in the Census is confidential. All Census staff, including temporary employees, are legally bound never to release personal information to any person or organisation outside the Australian Bureau of Statistics (except where the person agrees to take part in the Census Time Capsule Project).

Organisations like the Federal Police, Immigration and Centrelink cannot obtain personal information from the Census.

This page last updated 17 May 2011

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